

# North Hall News

Department of Political Science • University of Wisconsin–Madison • Spring 2012



## The American Democracy Forum

John Zumbrennen

In free governments,” Benjamin Franklin once said, “the rulers are the servants and the people their superiors and sovereigns.” But what does it mean for the people to be sovereign, to have no political superior? Are the people sovereign only when they vote for representatives? Are protests in the streets a proper expression of popular sovereignty? What about recall elections? Over the last year and a half, scholars, teachers, and students have discussed these sorts of questions at a variety of events organized by the American Democracy Forum (ADF). John Coleman and I founded the ADF in 2010 with the goal of encouraging ongoing conversations about the principles of American political thought and how those principles play out in American democracy today.

Last summer, high school teachers from around Wisconsin participated in the ADF’s first American Democracy Educator’s Forum. The teachers heard from faculty experts about the development of popular sovereignty and about political participation in our own time. They then created



Wisconsin teachers discuss popular sovereignty at the first American Democracy Educator’s Forum. From the left: Kathleen Doherty, Madison West High School; Allen Cross, Wingra School, Madison; Mallory Saurer, Madison Metropolitan School District; Jeanette Burda, Madison Memorial High School; Lisa Hebgen, UW School of Education.

curriculum to enhance the teaching of popular sovereignty in their classrooms. “I was very excited to be part” of the ADEF, said Rosanne Repta, who teaches U.S. history at Indian Trails High School in Kenosha. “We were able to

*Continues page 12*

## Scholarly Book Attacked by Rwanda Regime

Scott Straus



In February 2009, Alison Des Forges, one of the great human rights activist/scholars of our time, perished in a plane crash in Buffalo, New York. As

an historian and senior adviser at Human Rights Watch, Alison was an inspiration and mentor to dozens of scholars of Rwanda. She wrote one of the most important books documenting the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, and she was an indefatigable campaigner on past and current human rights violations. In 1999, the

MacArthur Foundation recognized her with a prestigious “genius” award. Her unexpected death was a major loss.

In May 2009, together with the African Studies Program, the Human Rights Initiative, and my colleague Lars Waldorf (of York University in the U.K.), we organized a conference in Alison’s honor.

When we gathered in Madison to commemorate Alison’s death, the assembled group of scholars found ourselves sharing a concern about the trajectory of contemporary Rwanda. In effect, the current regime is quite repressive and has put stability, security, and economic development

before political pluralism and human rights. I should add that our sentiment was at odds with a then prevailing positive reputation that Rwanda enjoyed in international policymaking circles.

After the conference, Lars and I decided to publish a book based on the Madison presentations and another meeting held in London. Rather than make the book about

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# 110 North—Notes from the Chair



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*John Coleman*

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# Award Winning Dissertations

Four UW Political Science Ph.D. students won dissertation awards at the 2011 American Political Science Association annual meeting. We featured two award winners in our Fall 2011 issue of *North Hall News* and we now feature the final two in this issue as we ask them to tell us about their award-winning research.

## Amnon Cavari

*Visiting Lecturer, Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya*  
Dissertation: "The Party Politics of Presidential Rhetoric"

### What were you exploring in your dissertation?

My dissertation explores the effect of presidential rhetoric on public opinion. Presidents invest time and resources in talking to the nation: they schedule well-advertised addresses, hold press conferences, and release numerous public statements. Yet, the conventional wisdom is that these actions rarely affect public opinion. Challenging current work, I argue that speeches of the presidents have a strong effect on Americans' policy preferences—once we recognize the partisan context of presidential actions.

### What got you interested in this topic?

I was struck by the current disconnect between scholarly research on the presidency and on the political parties. It seems unthinkable to talk today about the American presidency without considering the party system, yet the party system is missing almost entirely from existing work on the presidency. Similarly, although presidents are key actors in the political system, most work on the party system fails to consider how actions and words of presidents (while in office) affect the political parties and their evolution.

Consider, for example, the debate over invading Iraq. From 9/11 until invasion President Bush frequently discussed military intervention in Iraq. Despite these appeals, public support for using military action hovered just over 55 percent, suggesting that the President was not able to garner public support for his policy. The relative consistency of public opinion, however, masks significant underlining changes in public opinion. Until early 2002, the gap between the support of Republican and Democratic identifiers was approximately 10 percent. On the eve of invasion in March 2003, the gap went up to 44 percent. Furthermore, the administration's justification for the war strongly affected the growing polarization of the political parties on foreign policies—Republicans now taking a more interventionist view, and Democrats strikingly more dovish and isolationists.

Presidents may suggest that they alone are linked to the American people, above politics and beyond party. Yet, their words are said in expectation of, and heard within the context of partisan politics.



### How did you go about doing the research?

To measure the effect of presidential speeches on public opinion, I collected data on public opinion and presidential rhetoric from Eisenhower to Obama. For public opinion data, I searched for surveys that ask respondents for their attitudes about policy and about

their views of the political parties. To quantify presidential emphasis on policies I coded all major speeches of the presidents using a computer assisted coding scheme. The rich data offered great leverage to explore the direct and long-term effects of presidential rhetoric.

### What did you find? Were you surprised by any of your findings?

The findings demonstrate strong presidential leadership of public opinion. Following a speech, public opinion moves in the direction of the president. This effect is strongest among, but not limited to, people who share the same political predispositions with the president. Furthermore, I find that by talking about an issue, presidents attach to their party a positive reputation for handling the issue. For example, I show that by talking about the economy presidents increase the public interest in economic policy and attach to their party a positive reputation for handling economic policy. Using time-series modeling, I find that by improving the reputations of the parties to handle policy concerns, presidents significantly affect long-term changes of partisan attachments and, consequently, electoral behavior.

### What's next for this project?

I intend to proceed with this project in two directions. First, I want to explore presidential leadership of public opinion. Using laboratory experiments I plan to test the effect of presidential messages on individual perceptions of policy images of the parties.

Second, my dissertation suggests that Americans draw upon the information available to them to create policy reputations of the parties and that these reputations determine partisan attachments. I am currently testing this proposition by examining individual-level data and estimating the mediating effect of party policy reputations on partisan attachments.

# Award Winning Dissertations

## Brandon Kendhammer

*Assistant Professor of Political Science*

*Ohio University, Athens, Ohio*

Dissertation: Muslims Talking Politics:

Framing Islam and Democracy in Northern Nigeria

### What were you exploring in your dissertation?

My research looks at how Muslims living in newly-democratic countries think about and evaluate the relationship between Islam and democracy. Put another way, I study how people use their religious beliefs (in my case, in West Africa) to make sense of new, changing political circumstances. My dissertation looked at these questions in Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation.

In 1999, following Nigeria's first successful national elections in 18 years, a number of northern states attempted to implement a rather strict form of Islamic law (sharia) on behalf of their Muslim citizens. The public debate over whether it was appropriate for Muslim-majority states in a multi-religious nation to implement Islamic law profoundly influenced how Nigerian Muslims thought about their newly democratic government. My research tracks this debate, and uses some of the methods of public opinion research to see if and how it influenced the attitudes and beliefs of ordinary citizens.

### What got you interested in this topic?

I first travelled to West Africa as an undergraduate, on a study-abroad program to Cameroon. Following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001 (and the US's response to them), I became interested in the Muslim-majority nations of West Africa, where unlike Iraq or Afghanistan, democracy seemed to exist alongside popular demands for society to become more religious. How was it possible that Muslim politicians and citizens in Nigeria were demanding sharia in their country without rejecting democratic government (and, in fact, using the machinery of democracy to make their demands) if there was, as most Americans seemed to believe, something fundamentally incompatible about Islamic culture and democratic values?

### How did you go about doing the research?

My research used a combination of archival and interview sources. I did my initial research on the public discourse surrounding the Islamic law implementation crisis in the Northwestern University library, which holds one of the world's largest collections of African newspapers. Over the course of several months, I read every single issue



of a major Nigerian newspaper targeted at a Muslim audience, systematically looking at articles on sharia, and coding them based on how the article presented the relationship between Islam and democracy.

Having received a Fulbright fellowship from their Islamic Civilizations Initiative, my wife and I moved to the northern

Nigerian city of Sokoto in September 2007. The bulk of my research there consisted of a series of focus group interviews with ordinary Muslims—teachers, taxi drivers, small businesspeople and traders, homemakers—in which I tried to find out how their experience with the Islamic law implementation debate in the local media influenced their own beliefs about whether or not Islam and democracy were compatible.

### What did you find? Were you surprised by any of your findings?

My father provided the best summary I've ever heard of my findings, after reading the final product: "The people you talked to over there seem to want the same things we want over here." My interviewees said that they supported Islamic law implementation because they hoped it would make their political leaders more accountable. They believed that under sharia, politicians would be held accountable not only to them, but to God—an incentive for them to end corruption and to begin providing more robust social services. The popularity of sharia as a solution to the region's problems seemed not to come from support for radical Islam or a rejection of democracy, but from a hope that sharia would make democracy work better.

### What's next for this project?

I'm working on revising my manuscript for publication as a book. I'm also beginning some new research that looks at how Muslims who support Islamic law use the language of rights (human rights, women's rights) to make their case domestically and internationally. My ultimate goal is to complete a larger second project that looks at religion and democracy in Nigeria more generally—comparing the Muslim north with the predominantly Christian (and evangelical) south.

# Annual Awards Reception

Each April, the Department honors those faculty, staff, and students who have received awards and honors over the past 12 months. In addition to Department members, attendees include members of our Board of Visitors and alumni and friends from the Madison area. This year's event was held in the new Union South. The awards reception was followed by a talk by famed Chicago Chef Charlie Trotter ([polisci.wisc.edu/talks/trotter2012](http://polisci.wisc.edu/talks/trotter2012)).



Faculty award winners, Ryan Owens, Liane Kosaki, John Ahlquist, Katherine Walsh, John Witte, and John Zumbrunnen



Graduate Student award winners Nicholas Barnes and Sarah Niebler



College of Letters and Science Dean Gary Sandefur honors Robert and Susan Trice for their generosity to the Department of Political Science



Undergraduate scholarship winners Brandon Williams, Ellen Anevicus, and Lauren Nelson



Former Madison Mayor Joel Skornicka and Department Chair, John Coleman



Participants in the department's 2012 Washington, D.C. Summer Internship Program



# Recent graduates win award for strategic media plan

Stacy Forster

As recent University of Wisconsin–Madison graduates hoping to land jobs in political and strategic communications, Dana Vielmetti and Paige Helling this week found themselves in an enviable position.

The pair was in Washington, D.C., networking with influential political and media industry players after winning a major national award for strategic political communication.

Vielmetti, who graduated in May with degrees in political science and psychology, and Helling, who earned degrees in journalism and political science, won the 2011 Washington Media Scholars Media Plan Case Competition and National Excellence in Media Award for the strategic media plan they created for a hypothetical special election referendum.

The award is given by the Washington Media Scholars Foundation, which gives college students first-hand experience in public policy advertising and offers them the chance to meet leaders in the industry. The pair comprised one of six teams chosen as finalists from across the country to be part of a Media Scholars Week and compete for the national award.

“It was a great experience learning how to present and hold your own among professionals,” says Helling, of Orono, Minn. “It was almost like a weeklong job interview, but you’re learning a lot, too.”

In addition to the invaluable connections they made in Washington, Vielmetti and Helling will each receive a \$3,000 scholarship for winning the contest.

In this year’s case, Vielmetti and Helling represented a company with a significant financial interest in a referendum and were tasked with encouraging voters to vote “no.”

The students received complex, detailed data on political attitudes and how they related to print, cable and broadcast television, outdoor advertising and Internet audiences.

Their job was to target the best audiences for the campaign, ensuring the best payoff for the ad budget while also avoiding doing too much to stimulate those opposed to the referendum, says political science professor Charles Franklin, who worked with the pair as they prepared for the contest.

“Paige and Dana brought analytic rigor to the art of campaign advertising,” Franklin says. “Their quantitative analysis of audiences and political attitudes provided a campaign strategy that converted a losing campaign into a likely winner.”

Helling and Vielmetti put together a written report this spring. Their work earned them the trip to the finals, where they presented their strategy to a panel of six judges from the industry.

“Even if we hadn’t made it to the finals we would have had this awesome project for a portfolio,” says Vielmetti, of Mequon, Wis. “It was a great way to end (college) and then to start off in a career, because I now have these connections.”

Political science professor Ken Goldstein, who also worked with the team, says the students’ success highlights the training they received at UW–Madison. Franklin says the political science department emphasizes the value of quantitative analysis applied to political campaigns.

“We’ve put in place a series of classes which not only give students substantive information about political science and American government, but really try to give them analytical skills,” Goldstein says. “The case was really hard, but they had those analytical tools to be able to do it.”

While at UW–Madison, Vielmetti was the recipient of the Bill and Marge Coleman Undergraduate Research Fellowship, intended to give undergraduates more opportunities to do research. She and Helling both produced research for “Office Hours,” a UW–Madison show for the Big Ten Network that highlights work of UW–Madison experts.

The Media Plan Case Competition is only 2 years old, and UW–Madison is the only university to have a team among the finalists in both years. In 2010, Dillon Lohmer and Roshni Nedungadi represented UW–Madison.

Other institutions represented with finalists in the competition have included the University of Virginia, Washington University, the University of Montana, Michigan State University, Arizona State University, Indiana University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Helling says she’s working to land a job in Washington, D.C., while Vielmetti plans to teach English in Japan for a year before heading to the nation’s capital herself.

One thing the pair found reassuring: the number of Badgers they encountered in Washington, D.C.

“Every place we went, there was someone with Wisconsin connections,” Vielmetti says

*Reprinted courtesy of University Communications.*

Each year, the Wisconsin Alumni Association honors UW alumni under age 40 who are having an impact on the world early in their careers, and who have remained engaged and connected with UW–Madison. This year, the Political Science Department is proud to have two of its alumni selected for the Forward Under Forty Award. These profiles are reprinted courtesy of the Wisconsin Alumni Association.

### Caroline Savage MA'02, MA'04: Diplomacy Rocks Her World

Caroline Savage is a rock star, according to colleagues. She's an international phenomena for the foreign policy set. But you won't see her name in the headlines. Savage has played a quiet yet challenging role behind the scenes as a top leader in Russian and Eurasian diplomacy and is headed to Africa. At thirty-two, Savage just finished a year planning, directing, and coordinating the development of policies relating to Russia at the National Security Council (NSC), during which she prepared briefing materials for all meetings with Russian officials and President Obama, Vice President Biden, and the National Security leadership. Typically, a Foreign Service officer would spend decades reaching this perch.

Now she is training to take a two- to three-year assignment as head of public affairs at the U.S. embassy in Mozambique. Savage has won six awards since 2005 at the State Department — accolades that foreshadowed her extraordinary path.

Prior to her NSC position, during Obama's "reset" of relations with Russia, Savage was a political-military affairs and foreign policy officer for the U.S. Department of State's Russia Desk. Her work to implement air and ground transit routes through Russia to Afghanistan has permitted the travel of more than 1,700 flights carrying more than 277,000 troops.



**UW Majors:** Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies; Political Science  
**Age:** 32  
**Location:** Washington, D.C.  
Foreign Service Officer, training for Mozambique embassy

From July 2007 to July 2009, Savage helped keep operations running during the threatened closure of the U.S. embassy in Minsk after tensions flared between the United States and Belarus. As the public affairs officer and consul, she led a large, local staff, despite a 90 percent reduction of American personnel at the embassy, and she temporarily served as chargé d'affaires.

When Savage heads to Mozambique in August, Africa will be a new continent for her. After her year at the NSC, she hopes to bring a more holistic perspective to embassy challenges. While some issues will be similar to her European assignments, Savage says she now has a broader perspective about other agencies' capabilities, which will be helpful when dealing with U.S. programming in education and combating HIV/AIDS and malaria.

When asked to return to campus to mentor students last year, the competent and calm Savage humbly

offered practical advice and encouragement. She continues to keep in contact with Foreign Service hopefuls from UW–Madison.

She mentions her alma mater's influence on her in a recent essay that refers to the university's famed Sifting and Winnowing statement. Savage says that the most important lesson she learned at the UW was "to embrace the constant sifting and winnowing in an ongoing learning process that continues to help me search for clarity and forge decisions in a world of ambiguous and sometimes contradictory information."



### Scott Resnick BA'09 and Jon Hardin BS'08: App Experts

When Scott Resnick '09 (left) and Jon Hardin '08 (right) were still roaming the UW–Madison campus as undergrads, they could often be found wearing Badger red and hanging out at the Terrace — much like their Badger counterparts. But when it came to the social media scene so many students were into, Hardin and Resnick weren't busy downloading the latest apps on their smartphones and computers. They were developing them.

While living in Chadbourne Hall, Hardin and Resnick struck up a friendship that turned into a partnership when, along with several other students, they founded InZum. This online video streaming software business even won the group a \$2,500 prize during the tenth annual G. Steven Burrill Technology Business Plan Competition, hosted by the Wisconsin School of Business in 2007.

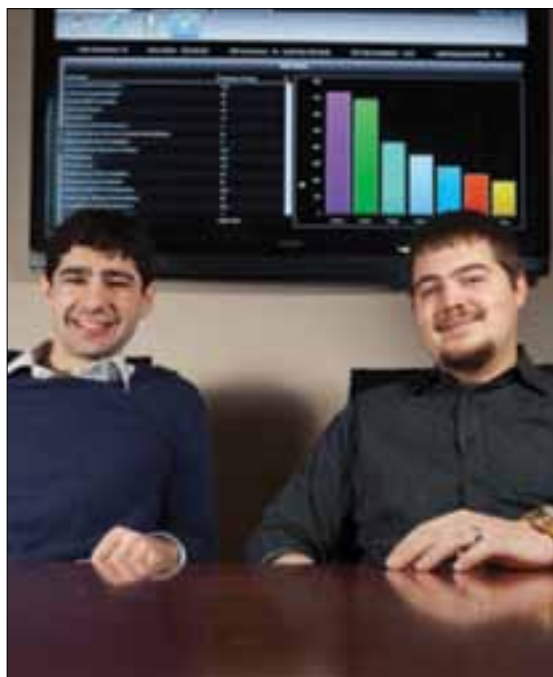
"There was an issue though," recalls Resnick. "That first business was a complete failure."

However, that didn't stop Resnick and Hardin from continuing to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams. In fact, both credit the UW for creating an environment that allowed them to succeed after college.

"The University of Wisconsin played a significant role in both of our lives, and allowed each of us to explore a career outside of our normal course curriculum," says Hardin.

Resnick and Hardin went their separate ways after that initial failed venture, but only briefly. They reunited when Hardin founded Hardin Design and Development.

As president of the company, Hardin oversees the development of hundreds of web, Facebook, iPhone, and Android applications. And in his role as vice president,



**UW Majors:** Political Science and Legal Studies (Resnick), Computer Sciences (Hardin)

**Age:** 25 (both)

**Location:** Madison

**Position:** Vice President of Hardin Design and Development (Resnick); President and CEO of Hardin Design and Development (Hardin)

Resnick focuses on new business development, account management, and portfolio investments.

Together they've built the company into an industry leader in mobile applications and software development, and they've won numerous awards, including top honors at the cutting-edge Consumer Electronics Show. Their work has even appeared in Apple Computer's popular iPad commercials.

With clients like Mercedes-Benz, Disney, CNN, IBM, AT&T, FedEx, and Sony, it might be reasonable to assume these guys had to pack up their belongings and set up shop deep in the heart of Silicon Valley. But no, their tech firm is thriving in Madison, the place where the Wisconsin Idea was born. And the core principles of the "Idea" continue to live on through Resnick and Hardin, inspiring them to give back to the community and UW–Madison. They've carried this

idea to their company, says Hardin, by hiring sought-after UW alumni and giving Badger students valuable internship opportunities.

The pair also helped found Capital Entrepreneurs, an organization dedicated to sparking new business development in Madison. Starting with twelve members in 2009, the organization has seen its membership rise to seventy-five in 2011.

In addition, Hardin has worked to build incubator space for early-stage technology startups in downtown Madison. And Resnick is currently serving his first term on the City of Madison Common Council, where he is also a member of the Economic Development Committee.

So when it comes to community and Badger spirit, these two clearly have an app for that.

### Second-Wave Neoliberalism: Gender, Race and Health Sector Reform in Peru

Christina Ewig



In the 1980s, Latin America experienced a major economic crisis. Many scholars focused on the politics of this crisis, and its effects on women

in particular, and found that the gaps created by economic austerity and cutbacks in state social services were largely shouldered by women. By the mid-1990s, most countries had continued on to a “second wave” of reforms: applying the same market-oriented principles to social policy areas like health, for example introducing private sector competition into state health systems and using market incentives (such as co-payments for services and decreased job security for health professionals) to promote greater efficiency and—in theory—accessibility.

When I embarked on my research for this book, we knew little of the politics of second-wave reforms in Latin America and even less about their implications for gender equity. In my book, *Second-Wave Neoliberalism: Gender, Race and Health Sector Reform in Peru*, (published July 2010 by Penn State University Press) I ask, did the politics of reform in Peru provide an opportunity to place previously ignored inequalities of gender and race on the reform agenda? And, what were the effects of these reforms on equity in access to health care—equity understood not only in class, but also gender and racial terms? My research involved interviews with

policy-makers on the politics of reform, and a survey and four ethnographic community studies in rural and urban poor neighborhoods to determine the effects of the reforms.

I show that Peru’s reformers were successful in overcoming historically-rooted, class-based opposition to health sector reforms (where unions sought to defend their privilege of a better-quality social security health system); but rather than this defeat opening a window for a more universalistic health system that would address the needs of the majority of Peruvians that lacked health care altogether – including women’s and indigenous people’s historic exclusion from better-quality social security health services – the introduction of private health care providers led to greater class and race stratification and higher health care costs for women. Co-pays in the public sector also added disproportionately to women’s health care burden given their reproductive health care needs. Other reforms had more diverse impacts. Decentralization had unexpected positive effects when some local clinics mandated that their staff speak Quechua – an improvement for indigenous women who, unlike their male peers, rarely speak Spanish. More tragically, reforms that reduced job security combined with an aggressive family planning policy, and led to the sterilization without informed consent of thousands of primarily indigenous women; continuing a legacy of eugenic practices, now under the auspices of “reform”.

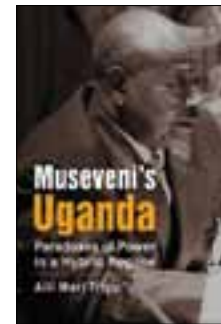
This overall lack of progressive change was in part due to the conservative political milieu, but also due to a lack of political consciousness among feminists, labor, and other organized sectors of society of the health care exclusion faced by the majority of poor, primarily indigenous Peruvians, and of the gendered and

racialized implications of seemingly “neutral” reforms.

While the story is complex in that different policies have different effects dependent on the intersections of class, gender and race involved, I demonstrate that seemingly neutral policies can have significant effects on gender, race and class equity. Many of the lessons of my book, although based on Peru, are relevant to health policy reforms currently underway in the United States and elsewhere around the globe where similar measures are under consideration.

### Museveni’s Uganda: Paradoxes of Power in a Hybrid Regime

Aili Mari Tripp



Uganda recently made headlines for brutally cracking down on opposition party leaders, protesting rising fuel and other prices in a rather benign “walk to work”

demonstration. Last year Uganda gained international notoriety when a member of parliament proposed a bill that would execute gays who were infected with HIV/AIDS. These repressive actions are one face of Uganda, which has been under the rule of President Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Movement since he took over the country through a guerilla war in 1986. The other face is a more democratic one, which has allowed more space for civil society, moved the country from a one party to a multiparty state; promoted women’s leadership; and allowed for a somewhat free press and greater independence of the judiciary and legislature. In writing and teaching

## Book Notes

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about Africa for the past 25 years, I became interested in the paradoxical nature of these hybrid regimes, which have come to characterize much of the political landscape of Africa since democratizing winds swept the continent in the early 1990s.

What distinguishes these hybrid regimes from democratic regimes is their lack of consistency in guaranteeing civil and political liberties. At the same time, it is their regard for some of these liberties that sets them apart from full-blown authoritarian regimes. Thus, while Uganda is not democratic, it also is not the dictatorship of Idi Amin (1971-79) or of Milton Obote II (1980-85). Today, many of Africa's newly democratizing regimes appear stalled or give no indication that they will go beyond electoral reforms to further political reform. Hence the paradox of

Museveni's Uganda and of many other African governments: steps toward political liberalization are controlled in ways that, in fact, further centralize authority.

A key dilemma of power lies at the nexus of security and patronage. Leaders pursue patronage in order to buy support to stay in power. They also rely on security forces to intimidate their opponents into submission.

Because rulers have illicitly obtained state resources and have used repression they must stay in power. Leaving office will surely mean exile, repression, imprisonment, or death. It might even mean a trip to the Hague to be tried in the International Criminal Court. But in order to stay in power they must continue to use patronage and repression. And so leaders remain in an impossible catch-22 situation in many such hybrid regimes, especially

the ones that sit on the authoritarian end of the spectrum.

My book is based on seven research trips to Uganda of several months each and one more extended stay. Although my initial work in Uganda involved the study of the women's movement and women and politics, it provided many insights that I was able to draw on in Museveni's Uganda. In developing the book, I conducted fieldwork in seven cities and rural towns. This involved interviews and discussions with hundreds of leaders and members of national and local organizations, entrepreneurs, politicians, party leaders, policymakers, opinion leaders, academics, journalists, representatives of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), businesspeople, representatives of development agencies, and many others in Uganda.

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### Rwanda *continued from page 1*

Alison per se, we decided it should reflect her priorities and concerns. In the end, we collected 26 distinct contributions from a total of 29 authors in a volume called *Remaking Rwanda: State Building and Human Rights after Mass Violence*. The University of Wisconsin Press published the volume in a human rights book series that I co-edit.

Lars and I assumed that the book would generate a negative response from the Rwandan government, which brooks no dissent. But we had no idea how negative. Even before the book's official release date in April 2011, a website was put up called "Remaking Rwanda: Facts and Opinions on the Ground," and its sole focus is to attack the book. None of the posts engage the book's main ideas and arguments. The posts are primarily ad hominem attacks on the contributors. The Rwandan embassy to the U.S. in turn put a link to the website on its homepage. The state-supported daily newspaper, *The New Times*, has run at least five articles lambasting the book and the contributors. One memorable line called my co-editor and I a "pair in despair;" another referred to us all as "vultures." Some of the pieces have been quite nasty.

The vitriolic response has had some positive implications. First, the response illustrates one of the main claims in the

book, namely that there is little space for public dissent and criticism in the country. Direct political challengers to the regime and independent media face much worse fates than we did, but nonetheless the vituperative reaction shows how restrictive the flow of ideas in Rwanda is. Second, the reaction provides some unexpected publicity. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* ran a long feature in which I was given a fair amount of space to articulate my views. We have had inquires about the book from around the world. This summer, Lars and I were asked to contribute to a briefing of the incoming U.S. ambassador to Rwanda.

Overall, the reaction has saddened, but not surprised, me. Many of the book's authors were moved to honor Alison's legacy, but also to register concern about the trajectory of a country we hold dear. The reaction to the book has underscored how controlled and ultimately troubled a place Rwanda still is. As scholars, and especially so at Wisconsin, we often hope that our work has implications within and beyond the academy. My hope is that the book and the reaction to it have brought to light problems in Rwanda's reconstruction and will make some think twice before naively concluding that Rwanda is a model for the rest of the continent.





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### **The American Democracy Forum** *continued from page 1*

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focus both on content and on teaching methods that work.” Rosanne and her fellow participants returned to campus in December and again in April to report on their efforts and to continue their discussions. This summer, a new group of educators will take up the theme of liberty, interacting with UW faculty and planning new curriculum for their classrooms.

Other American Democracy Forum programs include scholarly conferences and talks, a postdoctoral fellowship, and new undergraduate courses. In fall 2012, the ADF will launch an undergraduate fellows program. Earlier this spring, we chose our first class of fifteen fellows through a highly competitive application process. These fellows will take part in a special seminar on “Electoral Politics in American Political Thought, help plan a series of events to mark Constitution Day, and participate in other ADF programs, including our Educator’s Forum. They are also eligible to apply for research fellowships for summer 2013.

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